

# *The Desert* **SUSTAINER**

November, 2003

*Serving the soldiers of LSA Anaconda and Sustainer Army Airfield*

## Aviation run brings out the Halloween spirit

by Pvt. Christopher Fincham

A beauty queen, Spongebob Squarepants, and the Grim Reaper joined over 900 other runners October 31, for the Talon Halloween 5k Fun Run here on Sustainer Army Airfield.

The run, sponsored by 11<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment's 6<sup>th</sup> Squadron, 6<sup>th</sup> Cavalry, brought runners from all over the airfield and Logistical Support Area Anaconda to celebrate Halloween in Iraq.

"We just thought the soldiers could use something to get their spirits up to start the holiday season," said Capt. Jonathan Elias, an organizer of the event.

And spirits were definitely up from laughs and smiles to spirits of a more supernatural sense.

"I've had this costume for a couple of years," said Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Mark Seigfried of 19<sup>th</sup> Support Center who came to the event as a 7-foot tall Grim Reaper. I had my wife mail it out here to me."

Spongebob, or Maj. Wiley Thompson as he is normally known, also came out for the fun run.

"My kids love Spongebob and they wanted me to wear this for Halloween," Thompson said. It's definitely funny."

Smiles abounded as various costumes crowded the flight line. One officer, Capt. Bryan Darilek from Bravo Troop, 6-6 Cav., had all eyes on him as he tried to figure out if he had won or lost a bet.

"Somebody's daughter sent it to an officer in our unit and a bet started that I wouldn't wear the costume without seeing it first," said Darilek. So here I am...I'm a beauty queen."

Other participants were simply

disguised as runners according to Brig. Gen. Vincent E. Boles, 3<sup>rd</sup> Corps Support Command commander, who was on hand to give some words.

"It's good to see so much holiday spirit," said Boles. I see that some of you are masquerading as runners...good luck."

Remember why you're here. You're celebrating Halloween out here so you're families and children can celebrate it back home. Thank you for what you are doing – happy Halloween.



Soldiers from across Logistical Support Area Anaconda came out to Sustainer Army Airfield for the 11th Aviation Regiment's Halloween run. Many runners completed the 5 kilometers in costumes.



# Powell: US underestimated Iraq's pre-war status

CNN — The United States failed to properly assess Iraq's pre-war economy U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell said Friday, but he blamed the condition of the country on its deposed leader Saddam Hussein.

"I will say, in all candor, that we underestimated the level of damage that had occurred to the infrastructure as a result of the period of sanctions, but more importantly as a result of the manner in which he ran that country in such a brutal, dictatorial way for almost 30 years," Powell said.

The secretary promised full cooperation with congressional investigators looking into U.S. intelligence assessments before the war.

"I don't want to downplay this. It is a dangerous situation," Powell said. "Our principal goal in the near future is to get the

security situation under control in the Sunni triangle — Baghdad, Fallujah, that whole triangle. Once that is done, then you'll see a lot of criticism — about whether we are on the road to success or not — go away."

Powell said that, to beef up security, more former members of Saddam's army and police will be incorporated into the new militias, police forces and border patrols. "We'll build 'em up as fast as we can, and when they come back this time, they will be representatives of the people and not of Saddam Hussein."

U.S. officials have said they believe Saddam is still in the country, protected by his loyalists.

Soldiers have been scouring the region around Tikrit, Saddam's ancestral home, and cracked down on the movements of people in and out of a nearby town that is Saddam's birthplace.

## U.S. Forces seal off Saddam's birthplace

UJA, Iraq — Facing an increasing tide of attacks, American soldiers Friday cordoned off the village where Saddam Hussein was born, suspecting this dusty farming community of being a secret base for funding and planning assaults against coalition forces.

"There are ties leading to this village, to the funding and planning of attacks against U.S. soldiers," said Lt. Col. Steve Russell, a battalion commander with the 4th Infantry Division, which is based in nearby Tikrit.

The operation began before dawn with hundreds of U.S. troops and Iraqi police. They erected a fence of barbed

wire, stretched over wooden poles, and laid spirals of razor wire around the village, about six miles south of Tikrit.

Checkpoints were set up at all roads leading into the village of about 3,500 residents, many of them Saddam's clansmen and distant relatives.

All adults were required to register for identity cards that U.S. officials said would allow them "controlled access" in and out of the village.

"This is an effort to protect the majority of the population, the people who want to get on with their lives," Russell said. "What we have seen repeatedly month after month is not necessarily attacks against coalition forces in this village, but there are ties to the planning and organizing these attacks. That is not fair to the rest of this

village."

The intensive hunt for the deposed leader is spearheaded by the top secret Special Operations Task Force 20, and American officials in Iraq have said little about any progress. The United States has offered a \$25 million reward for Saddam's capture.

On Oct. 13, Maj. Troy Smith, executive officer of the 1st Brigade of the 4th ID, told reporters that Saddam was "at the least" maintaining "a strong influence" in the Tikrit area and may have traveled through the region recently.

Much of the hunt for Saddam appears to be focused in the area around Tikrit, where Saddam and other key followers could find shelter among family and clansmen.

## ASK THE GENERAL

**Have a question? Can't get an answer? Ask the general. Every week the 3rd Corps Support Command Commanding General, Brig. Gen. Vincent E. Boles will answer your questions in the Sustainer newsletter. For more information contact the 3rd COSCOM Public Affairs Office.**

## Anaconda POV policy

Effective immediately, no soldier or Department of the Army civilian is permitted to possess, operate or obtain a privately owned vehicle to include motorcycle or other motorized vehicle.

Any POVs in the possession of soldiers and DA civilians on or after Nov. 1 will be confiscated by the military police or base operations personnel.

This policy does not apply to bicycles or government-leased non-tactical vehicles.

## Surfer attacked by shark

Bethany Hamilton, who has competed in national surfing contests and was expected to go professional, was surfing a quarter-mile off Makua Beach near Haena when she had her left arm bitten off by a shark. Her arm had not been recovered. Hamilton, 13, is a competitive surfer who already has secured sponsorships and is expected to go pro, according to the Hanalei Surf Online Web site.

## Contact us...

The Desert Sustainer is a newsletter compiled, printed and published by the 3rd Corps Support Command Public Affairs Office. Please bring up any comments, suggestions or story ideas to us at 558-2053, or email [carolanne.diggs@us.army.mil](mailto:carolanne.diggs@us.army.mil), or stop by bldg. 4137.